

Oh Great Rhino, Rest now

Tribute to King Goodwill Zwelithini kaBhekuzulu (Son of Bhekuzulu kaSolomon)

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THE University of Zululand mourns the sudden passing of King Goodwill Zwelithini kaBhekuzulu.

The university has twice conferred honorary doctoral degrees on the King as a fitting affirmation of His Royal Majesty's sterling roles as a nation builder, wise leader, philanthropist and visionary leader who invested in changing people, institutions, South Africa and Africa at large.

May the Horn now paw the air howling goodbye
Yes, may the wounded silence touch the air with our tears.
May the Horn, solemn, and its throat filled with our sadness
Shake the air, poke time and the sky from the great hill,
With a sombre shrill – King Goodwill Zwelithini kaBhekuzulu is no more.
Tell time to stand still if he or she wants to
We could not care less for motion –
King Goodwill Zwelithini kaBhekuzulu, the Great Zulu King is gone.
May the curtain of the sky open wide
May the Great Beyond prepare his palace – for a King is in passage –
we weep; we grieve – he must take his place among
The great illustrious African kings and queens and ancestors.
The eagle of time and the mystery of life has robbed us greatly!
And so we weep, and so we stand stupefied – tears pouring upon



Your name, son of Bhekuzulu kaSolomon...
King Goodwill Zwelithini kaBhekuzulu is no more!
Tell everyone, across all the Great Rivers of our Africa,
That the Great Rhino is on a journey to the land unseen.
Cast your voice onto the air, and let it be known
that South Africa is mourning today
The great African son's day is done.
Do not forget to begin at the Rift Valley, and let your call
Glide, in its mournful mood, upon the back of the Nile;
Speak to the pyramids too, the first failed ones and the great ones that stand
Tall and ever great, like Pillars of Times – the Pyramids know
The power and prowess of our Kings and Queens –
so, tell them then,
That our Great King is now sleeping forever from this earth,
And never to return to the world of the living, the way we saw and knew him.
King Goodwill Zwelithini kaBhekuzulu kaSolomon is no more.

The Great Rhino that wrestled against social ills is gone.
The Warrior King whose pointed spear-like vision saw him
Banish the wild-fire of HIV/Aids and cut it drastically.
The custodian of Zulu customs and traditions sleeps.
Our African Prometheus, who gave his people the torch of wisdom,
Vision and staunch god-like work for his own has retired to silence.
And the dark cloud is upon us, for our light bearer folds his arms
From the works of this world.
Weep not Africa, for the King has not really died,
For his great works have made him immortal; his contribution
To society will stick on the shelves of time forever.
Oh, Mother Earth, comfort us, cradle us as we battle to accept.
But King Goodwill Zwelithini kaBhekuzulu looks upon us, from the blessed shores
Of the great, the land of our ancestors – he lives in Us!
And his name says to us to unite, for he was a man who
Toiled for the unity of his people – *oh Great Rhino we hear you even now.*
Go tell it around the world that the King is on a journey.
King Goodwill Zwelithini kaBhekuzulu, the Great *uBhejane* whose horn of wisdom
Was ever pointed – his wisdom still breathes among us.
His rhythm has always made the social and leadership *isiqwi*
A place of great reformation, transformation and innovation.
And now *Inkanyane kaNdaba, angangezwe lakhe* is

no more.
He leaves us all weeping and feeling orphaned
Who will guide us now?
The African sun is stunned; we are stupefied –
King Goodwill Zwelithini Bhekuzulu is no more.
What is the nation saying now?
Do we let the gold standard of leadership that the King left go into oblivion?
Do we let the customs of the people fade and become irrelevant?
Do we fall into a limbo and forget the King's great works?
We must stand up now and band together
And raise the banner of Africa coming into greatness
Higher
We must remember King Goodwill Zwelithini kaBhekuzulu now.
We must ask ourselves – What would the King have us do?
We must be aware that like many kings and queens, his spirit lives.
His unseen presence is watching us – we must honour the King now.
The great *uBhejane* is gone; the King is on a journey.
King Goodwill Zwelithini kaBhekuzulu *usekhotHEME*...
Call everyone from the highways and hidden corners of the world
Call them home to join us as our faces are downcast
Call everyone, to come and see us, African children,
The children of Azania, sons and daughters of Abenguni
We are becoming orphaned bit by bit – our father has taken
His last sleep, and he follows many of our kings and queens
To the place where no one ever returns from – his

journey has begun.
Come and see, oh world, a great tree, a significant embalmer
Of African wisdom has fallen.
The great post of African knowledge and power has toppled over.
There is wailing across the land.
Even the dogs are whimpering.
The rivers are still.
The ocean has taken a solemn sombre lull.
Son of Bhekuzulu kaSolomon has left us – and we weep.
The custodian of African custom and traditions and Pride is sleeping.
The Royal Shield, the wise Zulu Spear of Wisdom has left us.
The warrior King *ukhotheme manje.*
uMlokombane, uBhejane phuma esiqwini Inkanyane ka Ndaba
Ongangezwe lakhe... the great One of our Kings is no more.
African child, children of the formidable Abenguni, weep not.
Your father is not really gone – for great kings never really die.
They only sleep, and he is sleeping, he is going to join his fathers,
And wonderful mothers.
Yes, great Kings like Zwelithini Goodwill kaBhekuzulu, the African stars of leadership
Do not die. They multiply through our difficulties, our troubles,
Our memories and our holding forth of their names, which carry our histories.
Weep not then, Africa, the king is a great invisible lion,
A great star is our sky.
And he will guard us if we keep him and his great

contributions
Alive in our minds, through and beyond time – live long King Zwelithini Goodwill kaBhekuzulu!
Live on in our sighs over your great and god-like work whose fruits we enjoy – You have given us all your heart, you have played your part,
Excellent and powerfully.
Live on and long in our hearts, for we love ever more, like you are a dream.
Yes, to keep your legacy alive is our dream of the future. That we live
In our pride and love for who you have been to the African people – visionary.
We celebrate you now, as we will always.
We love you now; your memory has begun to flower in our minds
Oh how great you are and you will forever be, Great Son of Africa.
King Zwelithini Goodwill, kaBhekuzulu kaSolomon, take your place
Among the great Africa stars that shine forever in our sky.
Take your place beside King Shaka – *iLembe*, King Cetshwayo, King Sekhukhune,
King Faku, and many others, even those from across the continent.
King Zwelithini Goodwill kaBhekuzulu, rest now, great Son of Africa.
But he is not wasted, the great social worker, an alchemist of African greatness.
We celebrate you today, we doff our hats to you, Great Rhino!
Loyal Royal Spear of the Zulu nation.
Oh, sleep now, journey well...
Sleep, O! sleep well now, sleep well you, our beloved eagle of the Mind!
ALWEHLANGA OLINGEHLIYO HLANGA LOMHLABATHI

Palace plots and fights with the ANC and apartheid

SHALO MBATHA

HIS Majesty King Zwelithini was born on 14 July 1948, three months after apartheid came into force. Therefore, his whole life experience was shaped by living as a black man and Zulu monarch in a racist environment. He prevailed despite the vicious, dark apartheid cloud that was continuously hovering above every black person's psyche.

Like some of his forefathers, the king's life had been infused with intrigue, treachery, exile and a whiff of scandal. Even though there was no confusion about him being the heir, life dealt him a lousy card. For him to successfully ascend the throne, he had to stay one step ahead of his royal detractors.

His Majesty, *iSilo samabandla onke*, grew up in a modernised world but his was an ordinary Zulu rural life in the valleys of Non-goma. He herded livestock in the undulating emerald fields and, like most young Zulu men, took part in *ijadu* (matchmaking festivals). Even though he was particularly good at stick fighting, his number one love was soccer. He was a talented striker; whenever he touched the ball, his fans, especially the girls, would go berserk and scream "one-one", which was the number embroidered on his soccer jersey.

Tragedy struck early when the king lost his mother, Queen *okaThayisa*, hence he lived an emotionally lonely childhood. His life began to unfold when he was at KwaBhekuzulu College where his paternal-sister, Princess Nonhlanhla, helped him take his future into his young royal hands. She uncovered a plot to kill him during



a "hunting" trip and she sprung him to KwaNdebele where he worked in a rural store undercover with an assumed name, Percival Dlamini. When the royal family found out the Crown Prince was in exile, a furore bordering on a revolt erupted within the Zulu nation as they were not aware of the royal shenanigans. Moreover, he had no offspring.
Against the backdrop of the royal Zulu intrigue and conspiracy theories of the palace, black South Africans were in a state of low intensity, insurrection against apartheid all over South Africa. This made it imperative for Zwelithini to ascend the throne as a matter of urgency. The Zulu nation needed assurance that when apartheid was overcome, they would still be a nation. It also became clear that the Crown Prince needed to find a wife – and fast – in order to assume the throne from the prince regent, Israel Mkwazi. Despite several royal hurdles and sabotage by the internal palace politics, his wedding was fast-tracked. There was tension in the palace corridors as some royal family members felt that the prince regent

was doing a great job. The regent also saw no reason to step down. Mkwazi went even further, audaciously pronouncing a different 18-month-old prince as the new "rightful" heir. The hullabaloo raged on in the Zulu community, in the newspapers and radio shows across the nation.

Other pretenders to the throne used politics to frustrate the young crown prince and started a Coronation Trust Fund in August, 1971. It was ridden with so many problems that, in the end, it was abandoned. On the other hand, the white government was in a conundrum because the apartheid system did not have a plan to recognise a "new Zulu emperor".

He was finally crowned on an uncharacteristically cold, wet and misty day on the 3rd of December 1971 at the newly-built KwaKhetomthandayo Palace amphitheatre. Thousands of excited amaZulu, dressed in their colourful traditional regalia, poured in from all over the country and from different parts of the world to gather there. He was a mere 23 years old. An awkward minister of Bantu administration MC (*indlovu elinebatha*) Botha, presented him with a "Letter of Appointment". Perhaps, the apartheid government was sending a clear message to the brand-new king that he could be "fired" or "retrenched" from his reign at any time, if he defied apartheid laws. It was obviously wishful thinking, because he lived to see a democratic South Africa.

King Zwelithini lived an unenviable life as a monarch under siege while his subjects living under traditional leadership expected miracles. When the national conference about Constitutional Issues in a New South

Africa was organised in October 1990, one of the burning questions raised was the future of traditional leadership. The ANC's stance was that institutions of "hereditary rulers" and "chiefs" should be transformed to conform to democratic principles embodied in the Constitution. This caused nationwide tension. In retaliation, the king demanded sovereign recognition because the Zulu had defeated the British, a then world power at iSandlwana, in 1879. This coupled with the fact that the Zulu had fought the last conventional war against oppression in Nkandla during the 1906 Poll Tax Revolt. But his demands were dismissed with contempt. After careful consideration, he woke up one morning, put on his military regalia, went to the KwaZulu-Natal Legislature with his regiments in tow and announced that the Zulu empire would seek to secede from the Republic of South Africa and revert to King Shaka's borders, by any means necessary. He got the respect he commanded at Codesa (Convention for a Democratic South Africa). Hence, today, the Zulu king is recognised with Constitutional powers, prerogatives, rights and obligations. The Zulu *inkani* (will-power) had prevailed.

His Majesty King Zwelithini kaBhekuzulu passed on into spirit on March 12 this year. He was on the throne for 48 years, making him the longest-serving monarch in Zulu history.

Wena weNdlovu enamandla!

**An edited excerpt from the book Zulu History Decolonised by Shalo Mbatha. The Foreword was written by His Majesty King Zwelithini. It is available on www.ilovezuluhistory.com*

King Zwelithini kaBhekuzulu His legacy will live forever

NALEDI HLEFANE

THE University of Zululand (UNIZULU) is engulfed by a deep sense of sorrow following the sudden passing of His Majesty King Goodwill Zwelithini kaBhekuzulu.

A highly revered and socially responsible member of society, His Majesty has been conferred with honorary degrees by the university twice, in 1994 and 2018.

Since his crowning on December 3, 1971, the king has displayed exemplary leadership skills which shone through in the fulfilment of his royal duties and his philanthropic work. Among his notable achievements was his decision to institutionalise the custom of preserving virginity among Zulu maidens, by ensuring that an annual event is celebrated by the maidens who adhere strictly to sexual abstinence and thus remain virgins until they are married. Another was in 2009, when he reintroduced the custom of male

circumcision among Zulu males. Through the King Goodwill Foundation, the king was a champion in the fight against HIV/Aids – promoting educational, community development and anti-poverty projects.

During His Majesty's 2018 graduation ceremony, wherein he was conferred with an Honorary Doctorate in Social Work (honoris causa), UNIZULU Vice-Chancellor Professor Koliswa Mtose said: "UNIZULU acknowledges that the conferment of this honorary degree is a fitting affirmation for His Royal Majesty's sterling role and immense contribution as a nation builder, a philanthropist, a visionary and intuitive leader with deep-rooted values and a wise king investing his wisdom in changing people, institutions, South Africa and Africa."

The university extends its heartfelt condolences to the royal family and the Zulu nation at large.



King Goodwill Zwelithini at his first honorary graduation at the University of Zululand in 1994.



King Goodwill Zwelithini during his second honorary graduation at the University of Zululand in 2018.

Academics ponder centre for African thought at Unizulu

NALEDI HLEFANE

THE establishment of a centre for African thought at the University of Zululand (UNIZULU) is a concept that is possible and indispensable. However, several constitutional factors would need to be considered for it to successfully serve its purpose, academics noted during a recent webinar.

Titled “The Idea of a Centre for African Thought at the University of Zululand”, the webinar was presented by Professor Morgan Ndlovu, a professor in the Department of Anthropology and Development Studies at Unizulu. It took place as a result of previous discussions on the idea of a centre of this nature.

To unpack the title, Prof Ndlovu deciphered three key words within the topic: thought, African and centre. While thought or intellectual thinking is an innately human capability, historical documentation clearly insinuates that this is an exclusively white male ability. This dates from the 16th century where “Europe began to reconstitute itself as the authentic root of thinking”. During this era, global human experience was accounted for by white male figures from Spain, Portugal, the UK, Germany and France, regardless of time, context and spatiality.

“This way of thinking, which presumes that there is no thinking outside of white male thinking, can be traced back to the father of Western philosophy, René Descartes, who developed what is popularly known as the Cogito, ergo sum, which means ‘I think, therefore I am’. There are many interpretations of this notion, but the main one is the idea that he was laying a foundation for secular foundationalism, whereby a human being placed himself in the position of God to pronounce a self-evident truth that is unmediated by experience.

“This marked the end of the ‘political’ in the form of critical reflectivity on the part of those who were unfortunate enough to exist on the dominated side of the ‘colonial power difference’, as they had to rely on the truth of another human being who positioned himself as an imperial God,” Prof Ndlovu said.

Over the years, scholars began to question Descartes’ theory, ultimately giving rise to anti-Cartesian meditations, the objective of which is to challenge epistemic solipsism of the Western subject.

With African knowledge having been shunned, Prof Ndlovu believes there is a strong need to rewrite the history of Africa, this time through the eyes, think-



Professor Morgan Ndlovu supports the idea of a centre for African thought being established at the University of Zululand.

ing and experiences of an African. This is the type of role a centre for African thought would seek to play. It would embrace all forms of African thinking, including occurrences outside the academy.

Some of the characteristics of an ideally African centre within an institution like UNIZULU would include privileging the histories and perspectives of the people of southern Africa from the pre-colonial era to the present; cross-fertilising African knowledge(s) into the university’s curriculum; and dealing with dynamics of dominant recognition by deliberately encouraging the citation of African scholars who were historically not represented.

Responding to the presentation, Prof Siphamandla Zondi, a professor of politics and international relations at the University of Johannesburg, agreed with Prof Ndlovu.

He said UNIZULU could establish and successfully run the centre by employing a few cost-effective measures that included harnessing Afro-sensed knowledge(s) in the institution; encouraging dialogue among students and academics; making the centre a repository for papers of prominent scholars and activists, first in the province and then across the world; and positioning the centre as a fraternity, as that was the direction being taken by most centres.

In her vote of thanks, Dr Smangele

Cele, a lecturer in the Department of Sociology, was in awe of the profound words uttered by the academic giants, saying they would resonate in the classrooms, through teaching and learning, research and community engagement.

“The centre will be a repository to strengthen, reshape our thinking and learning as well as research. It will allow for freedom of writing. Like Steve Biko said: ‘I write what I like.’ We will now write what we like. We will write about our lives, about Africa, about being Africans and activities that happen inside and outside of the university,” she said, adding that the committee would work hard in ensuring that the centre was established and functioned.



GEARING UP FOR THE 2021 ACADEMIC YEAR

The University of Zululand is ecstatic about the prospect of another fruitful academic year with first-time entering students (FTENs) as well as returning students.

After finalising the 2020 academic year, which ended at the beginning of March, the university commenced its registration process from March 1 to 19 this year. In line with the Covid-19 regulations aimed at minimising the risk of infections, students registered online using either hand-held devices or computers.

More than 3 500 FTENs have successfully registered. Of those, 28% have enrolled in programmes offered in the Faculty of Arts, 29% in the Faculty of Commerce, Administration and Law, 21% in the Faculty of Education, and 22% in the Faculty of Science and Agriculture.

The number of returning students is 11 283. The highest intake is in the

Faculty of Commerce, Administration and Law, where 3 981 students registered.

The Faculty of Education has the second-highest number of returning students registered – 3 854. In the faculties of Arts the number of returning students is 3 665, and in Science and Agriculture 3 330.

It is worth noting that among the FTENs is the first cohort of students registered to study towards the newly-accredited engineering qualifications, the Bachelor of Engineering in Mechanical Engineering and the Bachelor of Engineering in Electrical Engineering. A total number of 76 students have enrolled, 34 of whom have chosen the electrical engineering stream and 42 the mechanical engineering route.

All FTENs were welcomed to the institution during the orientation programme that began on March 23 and concludes today, March 30.

University of Zululand presentation to the Portfolio Committee gets a positive nod

GCINA NHLEKO

THE Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee on Higher Education, Science and Technology, Mr Mohlopi Phillemon Mapulane commended the University of Zululand’s progressive efforts when it reported back on governance and related matters pertaining to the institution.

The Portfolio Committee is widely known for its rigorous approach and robustness when it comes to holding universities accountable and leaving no stone unturned.

The briefing session took place on Tuesday, March 16 and was led by the University’s Chairperson of Council, Ms Nomarashiya Caluza, whose presentation overview focused on governance and management, teaching and learning during lockdown, student performance statistics and success rates, infrastructure development projects, finances and audit outcomes, NSFAS disbursement and readiness state for 2021.

The university was commended for its implementation and roll-out of the multimodal approach since the national lockdown, which posed a threat to the academic enterprise. The university provided students with laptops and data to ensure they were able to continue with their studies, irrespective of location. Preparation and printing of hard copy study material, as well as the packing, sorting and delivery of this study mate-

rial, was undertaken across 59 delivery points nationwide. In order to ensure quality and reach to students, WhatsApp groups per delivery site, bulk SMS and phone calls were used to alert students before delivery was made.

Mr Nhlakanipho Nkwanyana, UNIZULU Convocation President, said as a bona fide graduates of the institution, we are pleased with this outcome. “We applaud this unprecedented move by the Portfolio Committee. The Portfolio Committee unreservedly commended the institution for good governance (council) and management (executive) of the university, as well as the university’s responsiveness and sensitivity to the effects of Covid-19. UNIZULU was considered to have done well in embracing a strategic approach developed by the department of responding to the impact of Covid-19 through the introduction of a multimodal system of teaching and learning. In this regard, the portfolio committee indicated that most universities were experiencing difficulties. In essence, it was deemed that other universities could take a leaf out of UNIZULU’s book. Most challenges (accommodation, funding, etc) discussed were considered to be serious, but not peculiar to UNIZULU, as they were prevalent across the board,” Nkwanyana said.

“We commend all stakeholders for their continued collaborative efforts in making UNIZULU a high performing institution.”



Nomarashiya Caluza, Chairperson of UNIZULU Council, led the recent meeting between the institution and the Portfolio Committee on Higher Education, Science and Technology.